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AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
GRIZZLY BEAR RECOVERY
COORDINATORS OFFICE.

NOV 10 1997

Dr. Christopher Servheen
Grizzly Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 5127
Missoula, MT 59806

Dear Dr. Servheen:

It is our understanding that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on reintroduction of grizzly bears to the greater Salmon-Selway-Bitterroot Ecosystem. As such, we are writing to express our support for Alternative 4, the Conservation Biology Alternative submitted by the Alliance for the Wild Rockies and Salmon-Selway Grizzly Coalition.

Alternative 4 is a common-sense, habitat-based approach that is supported by many of the world's leading grizzly bear experts, including Dr. John Craighead and Dr. Charles Jonkel. We believe that Alternative 4 is better than Alternative 1, the ROOTS "Citizen Management" proposal submitted by the Resource Organization on Timber Supply, the Intermountain Forest Industry Association, and other groups.

Alternative 4 compliments legislation we have introduced, H.R. 1425, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA). NREPA is bi-partisan, ecosystem-based legislation that would protect more than 20 million acres of Federal public lands including the greater Salmon-Selway-Bitterroot Ecosystem. Grizzly bears play an important part in this ecosystem, and as a result, would be used as a key indicator species to gauge the health of wildlife in the region.

Alternative 4 accomplishes the following:

- * maintains full legal protection for grizzly bears as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act for all grizzlies, whether they are reintroduced or immigrate naturally.
- * encompasses the entire Greater Salmon-Selway-Bitterroot (GSSB) Ecosystem.
- * protects roadless grizzly habitat by prohibiting logging and roadbuilding within roadless areas on National Forest lands.
- * links the GSSB and the Cabinet Mountains with a habitat linkage corridor to help foster

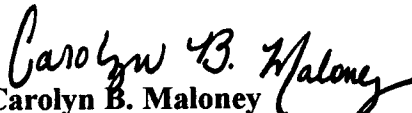
natural grizzly bear movements and genetic interchange. It is the only alternative which includes a linkage corridor. It also begins an immediate study of potential linkages between the Yellowstone and Glacier/Northern Continental Divide ecosystems.

- * restores grizzly bear habitat by ripping out 3,500 miles of logging roads to restore habitat linkage corridor and other areas. Road densities would be limited to 0.25 miles/square mile in the restoration zones. More than 1,500 high-paying jobs employing local people, including those in the timber industry, would be associated with the restoration.
- * implements management by a Scientific Committee of experts appointed by the National Academy of Sciences and would include scientists from the private sector, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the state wildlife management agencies in Idaho and Montana.

1 We also suggest adding a change to Alternative 4 to say that no bears may be taken from threatened populations including the greater Yellowstone and Glacier/Northern Continental Divide ecosystems for reintroduction to Idaho. Instead, let the Scientific Committee determine whether there are unthreatened populations which can provide a source of bears for reintroduction.

Thank you for your kind attention to this issue.

Sincerely


Carolyn B. Maloney
MEMBER OF CONGRESS


Christopher Shays
MEMBER OF CONGRESS